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Editorial

Thoroughly defeat OBL2

The US-Arroyo regime and Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) counterrevolutionary campaign Oplan Bantay Laya 2 (OBL2) is an utter failure. In spite of this, the regime and its military keep on claiming that OBL2 has resulted in the destruction of scores of guerrilla fronts and the deaths of thousands of guerrillas.

The opposite is true. The people's army has grown because of the people's anger at its brutality, because the enemy forces are overextended and because of the revolutionary forces' determination to fight and the lessons they have learned in struggle. Instead of being reduced in number, guerrilla fronts have multiplied. The NPA has been able to launch at least one tactical offensive per day.

The revolutionary forces and the masses have learned many valuable lessons in the face of OBL's intensified brutality. The most important lesson

they have learned is that the more the people are oppressed and repressed, the more they rise up in resistance.

Among the areas where OBL2 has suffered striking defeats since its inception are Mindanao, Eastern Visayas, Panay, Negros, Southern Tagalog and Bicol. Not a single guerrilla front has been dismantled in these areas despite escalating military operations.

The US-Arroyo regime thinks that it can recover from its military failures and losses and will be able to muster enough military force to realize its desire to hold on to power beyond 2010. It is desperately mounting even more unbridled attacks, killings, terror, intrigues and smear campaigns, lies and other abuses as its self-imposed deadline approaches. Millions of people will be victimized by these heightened fascist onslaughts.

In the remaining months of 2009 until OBL2's duration next year, the revolutionary forces will confront these attacks with full determination, zeal and defiance so as to thoroughly defeat the enemy's campaign and further advance the revolutionary movement and people's war to a higher level.



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The puppet Arroyo regime and its fascist generals must not be allowed to swagger about and inflict further harm. We must demonstrate in no uncertain terms the absolute defeat of OBL2 and expose and isolate the ruling regime and its fascist forces and hold them accountable for all their grave crimes against the people. We must show everyone the NPA's determination to fight to the hilt the fascist and puppet state and persevere in advancing the armed revolution.

The second half of 2009 and the entirety of 2010 is a most excellent period for intensifying tactical offensives and advancing the revolutionary movement nationwide, especially as the ruling regime and the entire system on which it stands are being shaken terribly by the socio-economic and political crisis.

The crisis besetting the entire global capitalist ruling system is exacerbating the permanent crisis in the country and sending even more shockwaves to the ruling regime. The depressed economy and the ruling regime's extreme isolation are comparable to the conditions that prevailed in 1983-86 and eventually led to the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship.



The reactionary camp is likewise in turmoil due to the ruling Arroyo faction's incessantly filthy and violent maneuvers to cling to

power and as various rival factions jockey intensely for better position.


The AFP, on the other hand, is rived by factionalism and in-

ternecine conflict especially in the face of severe corruption and Arroyo's blatant favoritism in promoting her loyalists. Arroyo has been maneuvering to position her most trusted general at the top of the AFP hierarchy before 2010 and thereby achieve complete control over the military. But this has only succeeded in worsening the rifts within the AFP and provoking further resistance from the people and the opposition to another imposition of military rule.

The AFP has long been isolated and despised by the people for its corruption, criminality, brutality and puppetry to US imperialism. It is extremely overextended in its desire to cover the most number of guerrilla fronts. Its small and isolated forces are thereby easily defeated by the people's army. The AFP has been asking for more troops and weapons, but faces an overly strained state budget that is made worse by the virulent corruption of Arroyo and her minions among the big bureaucrats, politicians and generals. This has caused widespread demoralization among the rank and file.

On the other hand, the NPA enjoys the people's vast support. It has been tempered in four decades of advancing the armed revolution. The revolutionary forces continue to amass victories and a wealth of lessons and knowledge in fighting the AFP's total war and in developing the requisites for waging more widespread, intense and advanced guerrilla warfare nationwide.

The entire armed revolutionary movement must take advantage of the intensifying economic and political crisis to expand and intensify guerrilla warfare. It must also take advantage of the extreme overextension and isolation of AFP forces and wage tactical offensives more vigorously.

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We must strengthen the capability of Party committees and NPA commands to exercise leadership and guidance and encourage the daringness and initiative of all NPA guerrilla fronts and platoons to launch tactical offensives according to capability, winnability and seized opportunities. The NPA must inflict many small and big body blows in various areas nationwide—within regions, between regions within major islands and between the country's major islands. It must likewise inflict selective head blows right in the enemy's centers of power. It must pay particular attention to launching offensives that

are striking in character and political effect, as well as conducting the necessary political and propaganda work and engaging in tit-for-tat battles with the enemy as the latter spews lies and launches its psywar and smear campaigns.

It is the resounding victories of our tactical offensives from now till the end of 2010 that will drown out Gloria Arroyo and the fascist AFP's lies and braggadocio, drumbeat OBL2's failure and serve as the people and the revolutionary forces' thundering send-off for a fake and corrupt president who is utterly despised and rejected by the nation. **AB**

Marcosian schemes

Twelve people were killed and more than 80 were wounded in a series of bombings that rocked Cotabato City; Jolo, Sulu; and Iligan City on July 5 and 7. Towers of the National Transmission Corp. in Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte were also bombed on July 7. This series of bombings took place after an explosion in the town center of Datu Piang in Maguindanao that wounded three civilians. Earlier, a bomb also exploded at the compound of the Office of the Ombudsman on June 28. The day after, explosives were found at the Department of Agriculture and in another building in Quezon City.

The AFP and PNP immediately pinned the blame on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) Special Operations Group for the Cotabato City bombing. Local Philippine Army officials pointed their fingers at the foreign terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah. National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales had still another theory, citing a small "anarchist" group based in Metro Manila and Central Luzon as the culprits, but saying that the bombers were merely testing the waters and trying to create a scare scenario.

What is immediately noticeable is the similarity of these bombings to those that Marcos had ordered the AFP and the police to undertake in many areas of Metro Manila in 1971 and 1972, before the declaration of martial law. Among them was the Plaza Miranda bombing in August 1971 that killed nine

people and wounded more than 90 others. Marcos used this incident as a pretext for suspending the writ of habeas corpus in 1971 and eventually declaring martial law in September 1972.

But with her US imperialist master's preference for the 2010 elections to push through and for any changes to be coursed through "constitutional" means, Arroyo's efforts are concentrated on utilizing "legal" means of extending her rule. She is resorting to, among others, convening a constituent assembly and running for a congressional seat to represent the second district of Pampanga so she can become House Speaker while constitutional changes that would pave the way for her installation as prime minister are not yet in place.

Every single "legal" scheme Arroyo has undertaken to prolong her stay in power has been uncovered

and thwarted, however. With the end of her term approaching, she has been resorting more and more to even dirtier, patently illegal and fascist schemes to prolong her corrupt and terrorist rule, including those that mimic Marcosian tactics and methods.

Arroyo and her minions have been hurriedly creating scenarios that would justify the use of emergency powers should all her "legal" gimmicks fail, including her plans to commit massive fraud in the coming elections and railroad changes in the constitution.

Among the other scenarios being built by Arroyo is the "no elections" scheme or the instigation of widespread electoral anarchy. With these scenarios preventing a new president from taking over at the appointed time, she could serve as "transition president" and continue her rule.

She is likewise taking steps to effect the early retirement of the current AFP chief, Gen. Victor Ibrado to pave the way for the installation of Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit, her most loyal and reliable general, before Ibrado's scheduled retirement in November. By putting Bangit at the AFP's helm, Arroyo believes she will be assured of total control over the military in case she declares a state of emergency or imposes martial law. **AB**

The US role in Philippine politics and electoral processes

The US has a long history of intervening in the country's politics. Through direct and indirect means, it is able to install puppet regimes to protect US economic, political and military interests in its neocolonies. For this, it utilizes elections as well as other means such as coups and destabilization schemes.

One of the things most desired by reactionary politicians is the blessings and support of their imperialist master. Arroyo is currently involved in secret negotiations with the US so they could come to an agreement on what means would be acceptable for her to remain in power. Arroyo has been courting US Pres. Barack Obama's favor through "cha-cha" and plans to abolish provisions that bar foreigners from owning land and strategic industries in the country. The US has confidence in Arroyo

for having proven to be a loyal puppet for the past nine years. The only thing the US is worried about in maintaining Arroyo in power is the possibility that the people's widespread and intense anger at her will only worsen the crisis of the ruling political system and leave an opening for both the legal and the armed patriotic and revolutionary forces to gain greater ascendancy.

The US may support the current ruling puppet's use of force, the same way it supported Marcos and

other dictators in the past. Nonetheless, the US is aware that this will merely exacerbate conflicts among the reactionaries, fire up the people's rage and provoke new uprisings. The US also knows that it cannot fully be in control in the event of barefaced military rule due to the AFP's current factionalism and Arroyo's weak hold over the military.

In the US' view, it would be more favorable to push through with the 2010 elections. It has recently expressed its "concern" over the possibility of social turmoil should the elections be cancelled or fail for various reasons, among them the anarchy that may result from the conduct of automated elections and growing threats and emerging scenarios of violence.

While it is in the process of resolving its stance on extending Arroyo's power, the Obama regime has also been holding talks with the various reactionary oppositionists in case it decides on a change of puppets. AB

Billions squandered in Arroyo's junkets

Gloria Arroyo has squandered up to P6 billion in the many frequent travels she has taken since 2001. This figure does not include the expenses she has incurred in her trips these past few months.

Except for a number of official travels, many of Arroyo's trips have served as junkets for the Arroyo family, rewards for her minions and opportunities for the Arroyo family to conduct its "private" business.

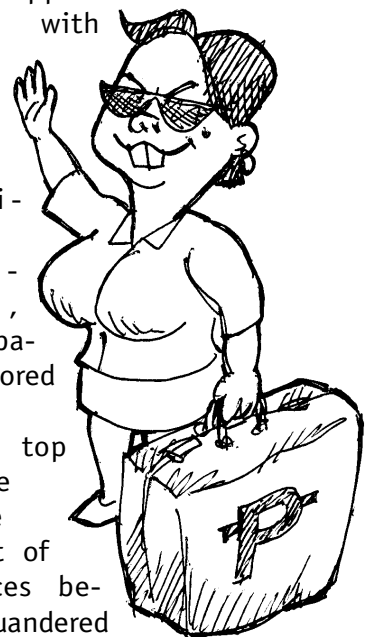
In December 2007, Arroyo had a retinue of almost 200 people during her trip to France, Spain and the United Kingdom. Among them were 34 congresspersons who voted against the third impeachment complaint against her. Each member of her delegation including wives, husbands and other companions was allotted US\$9,000. Also enjoying the all-expenses paid

trip were three senators, 50 businessmen-allies, Arroyo's husband Mike, their three children and four grandchildren and the latter's nannies. The delegation members' plane tickets cost \$5,000 each. They were each given hotel allowances of \$500 per night and \$3,000 shopping money. All this, at the expense of the Filipino people.

Last February, Arroyo officially spent P123 million for her eight-day visit to Dubai and three other Middle Eastern countries, where she had a 60-strong delegation. She also took a side trip to the US

in the hope of having at least a photo opportunity with the newly elected American president, but Obama ignored her.

On top of the huge amount of resources being squandered



on these travels, Arroyo's agenda in some of the places she has visited have been questionable. In June, she went on a highly suspicious "private" trip to Colombia and Barbados, in between her official visits to Japan and Brazil. Colombia and Barbados have earned notoriety for serving as repositories of ill-gotten wealth. Arroyo's trips were so secret, she did not even bring along her security detail.

The mystery of Arroyo's sudden side trips to Colombia and Barbados brings to mind the Arroyos' equally sudden "private" trip to Shenzhen, China in 2006 that brought forth the anomalous NBN-ZTE project.

Many critics of the Arroyo regime who monitor its every move are saying that the Colombia and Barbados trips have something to do with the sudden awarding of the ₱7.2 billion 2010 poll automation contract to the shady Smartmatic company. Smartmatic, which has been linked to other anomalous elections overseas, is based in Barbados.

The results of the automated elections in 2010 will certainly be dubious due to the questionable re-

lationship between the Arroyos and Smartmatic. Also a cause for doubt are recent revelations of longstanding ties between the Arroyos and Smartmatic's local partner Total Information Management Corporation (TIM).

From the Caribbean, Arroyo once again made a side trip to Dubai even if her last trip to this Gulf state was made only less than two months ago. Her first trip to Dubai was made ostensibly to raise jobs for Filipino workers, even if the emirate has been hard hit by the worldwide recession and was hardly in a position to provide employment. This time, however, Malacañang was silent. There are reports that Arroyo has been monitoring substantial secret investments in Dubai. Like Colombia, Barbados and other countries in the Caribbean, Dubai is used by many big-time criminals to launder their dirty money.

Amid all the brickbats about the huge expenses entailed in all these trips, Arroyo is set to leave the country again on July 15 to attend the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. **AB**

Extortionists pose as NPA

Alongside their stepped up military operations against the armed revolutionary movement, the Arroyo regime and the AFP have been intensifying their smear campaign against the Party, New People's Army (NPA) and their leaders especially with their deadline for fulfilling their pipedream of crushing the NPA fast approaching.

The whole country is awash with cases where the AFP and PNP in cahoots with criminal syndicates have been extorting from businessmen, professionals, ordinary employees and simple wage earners. Using the names of the Party and the NPA, the extortionists' goal is to destroy the prestige of the revolutionary movement in order to isolate it from the broad masses of the people. At the same time, the military, police and criminal elements get to milk huge amounts of money from the victims they have deceived.

In one recent example, a PNP intelligence officer attempted to extort tens of thousands of pesos from each employee of a municipality in the Cordillera. He was

easily caught because he did not even have the foresight to disguise his handwriting. In another case in the Cordillera, bus company operators in two provinces received rude and threatening letters from elements posing as NPA cadres demanding huge amounts of money. The signatories warned that their buses would be reduced to ashes should they refuse to cooperate. The NPA Chadli Molintas Command in Ilocos-Cordillera found out that one letter was written by a police officer and the other, by a traitor to the revolutionary movement.

And then there's the case of Leoncio "Ka Parago" Pitao, commander of the 1st Pulang Bagani Company of the NPA in Southern

Mindanao. With every previous piece of slander against him proven false, the enemy has now resorted to maliciously accusing him of living off the millions of pesos he has allegedly extorted.

In a statement issued on July 5, the Party said that it would act decisively against elements who seek to smear the good name of the revolutionary movement and enrich military and police officers and leaders of criminal syndicates. The Party called on those who have been victimized by these enemy schemes to report them to the appropriate revolutionary authorities so the latter can take immediate action.

The Party warned that such psywar and self-enrichment schemes by enemy officers are likely to escalate as their frustration mounts with the growing failure of Oplan Bantay Laya 2 which is scheduled to expire next year. **AB**



NPA seizes 8 firearms in Agusan del Sur raid

Red fighters under the 4th Pulang Bagani Company (4th PBC) of the New People's Army (NPA) in Southern Mindanao seized three M16s, an M14, three cal .45 pistols and a 9 mm handgun in a raid on the Philippine National Police (PNP) headquarters in Santa Josefa, Agusan del Sur on July 1. The raid was conducted without firing a single shot.

None of the policemen was hurt in the tactical offensive. The Red fighters wore military uniforms when they raided the PNP station. The disarming operation was over in ten minutes because the policemen did not offer any resistance. In a statement, 4th PBC spokesperson Ka Nadem said that the Red fighters respected and abided by the provisions of International Humanitarian Law which state that enemy forces who have surrendered and have become hors de combat should no longer be subjected to hostile action. AB

2 soldiers killed, 4 wounded in Capiz ambushes

At least two soldiers were killed and four were wounded in a series of ambushes by the NPA in Panay's Central Front against the 47th IB. The firefights took place as the US-Arroyo regime's soldiers were conducting massive military operations in Tumanduk communities in Central Panay.

In a statement, Ka Julian Paisano, spokesperson of the Coronacion "Waling-waling" Chiva Command of Panay said that the first ambush against soldiers belonging to Charlie Coy of the 47th IB occurred in Mt. Cabagol, Barangay Aglinab, Tapaz, Capiz on the morning of June 27. After a few hours, the NPA ambushed five soldiers on a reconnaissance mission in Sitio Karatagan, Barangay Katipunan, also in Tapaz town.

Another squad under Charlie Coy led by 2Lt. Leo Abulencia was ambushed on June 29 at around 8:45 a.m. in Tapaz.

There were no casualties on the NPA side. AB



AFP shells Tumanduk communities

The Philippine Army 3rd Infantry Division indiscriminately shelled Tumanduk communities in the uplands of Tapaz, Capiz on June 29.

The military did not even issue warnings to residents that it would be raining 105 mm shells on Mt. Garu. The livelihood of the Tumanduk tribespeople has been disrupted as the main road that links the mountainous barangays to the plains of Tapaz town runs through Mt. Garu.

Several shells exploded in Ganga along the Panay River, the major water route used by Tumanduk farmers in bringing their agricultural produce to the town center. The shells also hit a peasant family's house in Sitio Badas, Barangay Tacayan.

The Tumanduk's livelihood activities are now at a standstill due to the occupation of the barangays by hundreds of soldiers led by the 47th IB. Residents are also terrified by the constant circling of helicopters.

The immediate cause of the shelling was the series of defeats suffered by the military at the hands of the NPA in the last week of June (*See related article*). The 3rd ID launched a heliborne attack and used howitzers in a desperate attempt to seek vengeance.

Long before this, the 47th IB's Reengineered Special Operations Teams (RSOT) had already been relentlessly conducting harassment and psywar operations against the peasants. The Tumanduk tribespeople are vehemently against the military's plan of making them pose as NPA surrenderees and parading them in public. They are also opposed to their forcible recruitment into the CAFGU and the establishment of RSOT detachments in their barrios.

It is not true that the military has been distributing vegetable seedlings to the people, said Ka Julian Paisano, spokesperson of the Coronacion "Waling-waling" Chiva Command of the NPA in Panay. What the soldiers really brought with them are Armalites, machine guns and artillery so they could seize the Tumanduk's ancestral lands. For this, they will reap the minorities' intense loathing, Paisano added. AB

Military kills activist doctor

Military elements killed an activist doctor in Davao City, abducted a peasant leader from Occidental Mindoro in Taguig City and illegally arrested a church worker in Misamis Occidental. In Maguindanao, soldiers blocked 52 media personnel who were there to document human rights violations. These were the most significant cases of military abuse culled by *Ang Bayan* in the past two weeks.

June 30. Fifty-two media personnel were blocked at a checkpoint manned by the 46th IB in Barangay Bagan, Guindulungan, Maguindanao and detained for an hour. The media convoy was on its way to Datu Piang and Mamasapano towns to look into the plight of evacuees in Central Mindanao. After heated discussions with the soldiers and the media people's insistent demand that they be released, they were brought instead to the military camp in Crossing

Salvo, Datu Piang on orders of Maj. Gen. Alfredo Cayton, 6th Infantry Division commander.

The National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP) strongly condemned the arrests. Said NUJP director Rowena Paraan, the arrests were a violation of the right to free expression and the media personnel's human rights.



Dr. Rogelio Peñaera

June 29. A lay worker of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) was illegally arrested at a checkpoint in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental. Dennis Paradero Rodinas, 35, was able to call his wife Deanna on the morning of June 29 and inform her that his vehicle had been stopped at a checkpoint and that he was under PNP custody. That afternoon, a person claiming to be a PNP official informed Mrs. Rodinas that her husband had been brought to the 55th IB headquarters in Langub, Calamba, Misamis Occidental for interrogation. It became obvious that

the military planned to implicate Rodinas in various crimes because contrary to what he had reported to his wife, the AFP made the false claim that Rodinas was captured in a combat patrol operation and was carrying explosives and subversive documents. The military accused him of being a leader of the New People's Army in Western Mindanao and implicated him in the death of a CAFGU element in Clarin, Misamis Occidental last June 15. Rodinas' wife and UCCP representatives accidentally spotted him on the afternoon of June 30 aboard a truck parked in front of the Regional Trial Court in Tangub where he was slapped with false charges of illegal possession of explosives. Prior to this, he could not be located in any of the military or police headquarters in the province.

June 24. Dr. Rogelio Peñaera, chief epidemiologist of the Department of Health in Southern Mindanao and a member of the Alliance of Health Workers (AHW)

Military abuses in Abra

Elements of the 50th IB have been preventing relatives and townmates of Michael "Ka Tarius" Reyes from retrieving his remains in Sitio Layaban, Barangay Beew, Tubo, Abra for several days now.

Reyes, a Red fighter, was killed in a firefight between his unit and troops of the 50th IB in Sitio Layaban on June 6. His comrades were unable to bring his remains with them. The following day, his relatives and townmates tried to retrieve his body. They were supported by Tubo town officials but elements of the 50th IB nonetheless barred them from looking for Reyes' remains at the battle site. They left after four days. Ka Tarius' remains are now surely in an advanced state of decomposition but the military still stubbornly refuses to allow his relatives to retrieve them and give the slain Red fighter a decent burial.

The 503rd Brigade and the 50th IB in particular are guilty of a long list of human rights violations. The 50th IB is responsible for the death of Ilocos peasant leader Pepe Manegdeg and for desecrating the remains of Ka Braga and Sammy Rey "Ka Cholo" Cayago. The military crushed their bodies and faces beyond recognition. The 41st IB in North-Central Abra is responsible for the four-day detention and harassment of three civilians from Cubcuba, Bangilo, Malibcong last May. The AFP vented its ire on the civilians after suffering defeat in its military operations.

More human rights violations are expected in Abra as the military steps up its operations to pave the way for the entry of big mining firms in the province.

AB



was brutally killed in Davao City. Peñera and his daughter were ambushed by armed men aboard motorcycles as they were on their way home to a subdivision in Buhangin District. He sustained several gunshot wounds in the head and body while his 15-year old daughter was wounded in the arm. Peñera served as AHW national chairperson in the 1990s and was a member of BAYAN's regional council at the time of his death. He was also a member of the Health People United for the Removal of Gloria (PURGA), a group of health workers and professionals calling for Gloria Arroyo's resignation.

June 21. Armed men believed to be military agents abducted Obito Marquez, 31, a member of the

Kalipunan ng mga Samahang Magbubukid ng Timog Katagalugan (KASAMA-TK) in Occidental Mindoro. The victim was repairing the water meter of the house in Taguig City where he and his wife were temporarily staying when armed men seized him at around 10 p.m. and forced him into a van with a registration plate bearing the letters "PGG." After the PNP and AFP refused to acknowledge having custody of Marquez, he was found detained at Camp Crame on July 6. Marquez is one of 72 militant activists of Southern Tagalog falsely accused by the military of involvement in an NPA ambush in Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro in March 2006 that killed three policemen. AB

Filipino-American activist to pursue case against Arroyo regime and military

Filipino-American activist Melissa Roxas announced her plan to fight back and pursue cases against the Arroyo regime and military for her abduction and torture. Roxas' appearance at a Los Angeles press conference on June 28 was her first time to speak publicly about her traumatic experience since being surfaced.

Roxas and her two companions Jun Carabeo and John Edward Jandoc were abducted by about 15 armed men believed to be military agents while conducting a survey for a medical mission in La Paz, Tarlac on May 19. After several days of interrogation and torture, Roxas was released on May 25, followed with the release of Carabeo and Jandoc.

Arnedo Valera, Roxas' lawyer in the US, shared their plans to seek damages through the US Federal Court against her assailants and the Arroyo government. Complaints will also be filed with the appropriate United Nations (UN) agencies for the violation of Roxas' rights under the International Covenant Against Torture, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Before Roxas' return to the US to recover and seek medical treatment, her legal counsel Rex Fer-

andez filed a petition for a writ of amparo before the Supreme Court days after she was surfaced. The Court of Appeals is still hearing the petition and Roxas plans to return to the Philippines to appear at a scheduled hearing on July 24.

Roxas said that though it was difficult for her to talk about the incident, she wanted to expose what the Philippine government and military did to her, Carabeo, Jandoc and many others. She said that for as long as it would take, she would pursue the case to seek justice not only for herself but for the many other victims of human rights violations.

The Arroyo regime continues to deny its involvement or any knowledge of the abduction and torture of Roxas, Carabeo and Jandoc. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has dismissed Roxas' allegations as a mere fabrication while government lawyers stated that her ab-



Melissa Roxas

duction was stage-managed.

Meanwhile, militant groups under BAYAN-USA have launched a campaign seeking justice for Melissa Roxas and calling for an end to the use of US tax dollars to supply military assistance to the Arroyo regime and fund state-sponsored human rights violations. A letter-writing campaign to US Sen. Barbara Boxer of California, Roxas' home state, has also been started. Senator Boxer is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and is influential on how American taxpayers' money is spent abroad. AB

Mental health problems resulting from state fascism

The Arroyo regime's fascism and oppression have caused mental health problems among the people. Militarization in both countryside and urban areas is the leading cause of mental illness as well as physical ailments and injuries. A majority of patients are victims of fascist violence.

Victims of abduction, imprisonment, rape or torture by the military, as well as their families, including the parents of victims of extrajudicial killings, and especially children who have witnessed fascist brutalities experience deep mental trauma. Displacement also causes severe mental anguish, especially for children and the elderly who have difficulty adjusting. Stress affects their physical health and there have been growing complaints of insomnia, hyperacidity and hypertension.

The movement's response. The revolutionary movement has long been aware that dealing with the issue of mental health is part and parcel of health care in general. Mental illness, like ailments that affect other parts of the body, can and should be treated.

The revolutionary movement has already developed a mental health manual that revolutionary health workers have long been using as a reference. This was lately reviewed and revised as part of the revolutionary health sector's con-

tinuing efforts to develop its capability in this area.

Comrades down to the platoon, branch and barrio committee levels are armed with the necessary knowledge and the appropriate methods and their skills further developed to enable them to respond to mental health issues. Various units have launched trainings. Amid scarce resources, comrades use alternative and inexpensive methods of treatment such as acupuncture and herbal medicine. Serious cases are brought to expert or doctor allies. Some units have been able to develop their own capability to care for such patients.

The revolutionary movement's health services include providing diagnosis, treatment, counseling and care with the help of relatives.

In communities plagued by Oplan Bantay Laya, there are efforts to mobilize health commit-

Mental health of comrades

Caring for mental health can be done through strict adherence to discipline, maintaining warm relationships among comrades and continuously raising ideological levels, political unity and organizational efficiency. Continuous consolidation among comrades and the masses is the key to having healthy minds, a high fighting spirit and the ability to resist the psychological damage caused by state repression.

Because of continuing education and consolidation work among comrades, their morale remains high. Through this, they are able to cope with ordinary levels of stress and pressure. But it must be recognized that individual comrades have different ways of dealing with pressures that may lead to mental illness.

Experience has shown that it is the understanding, care and support shown by comrades and the organization that proved to be the key in the complete recovery and resumption of duty of comrades who faced mental health challenges. Among the organized forces, it is important that fellow comrades understand, provide support and continually assess the situation of such patients. The role of

the collective is invaluable in analyzing cases, coming up with recommendations, monitoring compliance with these recommendations and giving guidance to those suffering from mental health issues.

Leading organs have an important role in recognizing, giving priority to and improving mechanisms to avoid the occurrence of such problems or cope with them should they arise. On the part of patients, the key is for them to have an understanding of their situation. Comrades must strive to create the most favorable conditions for patients. While under treatment, patients should be assigned tasks suited to their situation. In the case of Red fighters, they are assigned to non-military tasks.

It is important for comrades to unite around this orientation, possess the necessary knowledge about mental health care among revolutionary forces and propagate this knowledge at all levels of the organization. Although mental health problems must be approached comprehensively, there comes a point when ordinary organizational processes will no longer suffice and medical intervention is needed.

AB

tees to debrief and counsel victims to help them cope with traumatic experiences at the hands of the military. Children may be treated through play therapy like drawing and other activities to help them express their deep-seated feelings. Cultural presentations and similar activities are launched to reduce their mental burdens and lighten their mood.

Most important of all, the revolutionary movement must continue mobilizing the masses and providing political education to them. The people must contin-

uously be aroused and their fighting spirit raised. Their struggle against militarization must be intensified to stop the military from inflicting more harm.

It is this kind of political struggle that provides the most help in developing the confidence and resolve of victims of abduction, detention and torture by the military. The victims feel the support of the people which provides them the inspiration to persevere in struggle. The support of relatives and other sympathizers has also been effective. **AB**

Ka Cesar: Revolutionary father and leader

Ka Cesar has retired from fulltime service in the people's army. Though still strong at the age of 62, he has difficulty with long walks as a result of a bullet wound that seriously injured one of his feet.

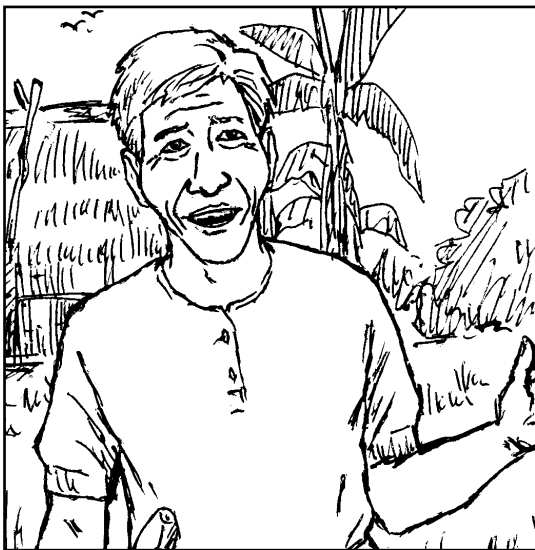
But for Ka Cesar, retirement does not mean an end to his participation in the revolution. In fact, he still actively carries out his tasks as a member of one of the local Party branches and as a political instructor of a people's militia unit. He has no plans of ending what has so far been 35 years of contributing to the revolutionary efforts of the Filipino people. "For as long as I am able, I will continue to serve in the revolution," he said.

"We are presently working hard to consolidate the people's militia," said Ka Cesar. Fortunately, one of his strong points is his long experience in education work. "Party cadres must always be sharp," he said. That is why he continues to give his all during Party and political educa-

tion sessions, reads revolutionary publications and listens to the news on the radio. "I want to be an example to my comrades in the locality," he added.

Ka Cesar and his whole family have had to go through enormous sacrifices during his long years of being active as a revolutionary

fighter and leader. His wife and children were severely harassed by the military as soon as he joined the people's army. They had to move several times for their own safety. Many of the huts they built were later



burned down by the military in an attempt to weaken their resolve. In each new place they moved to, they started over again and continued in their struggle. "We were like seeds that willfully sprouted and flourished wherever the Party

planted us," said Ka Cesar.

It is no surprise that Ka Cesar's children are as steadfast as he is because not once did he relent in raising their consciousness so they would embrace the revolution. "I organized them," he said. His closest partner in the revolution is his wife, who also remains active as a Party branch member and leader of the women's organization in the barrio. Their strivings have borne fruit, as all of their six children followed in their footsteps. Five of them became fulltime fighters of the New People's Army. Sadly but with much pride, Ka Cesar mentioned that two of his children gave their lives for the revolutionary cause. Their deaths, both in encounters with the enemy a few years ago, came only two weeks apart.

"We will never deprive the movement of our children," said Ka Cesar. The deaths of their two children were painful for the couple, but they wholeheartedly accepted this as part of the necessary sacrifice. Ka Cesar said that they are now molding their grandchildren to follow the same path. "Before I die, I want to see my grandchildren continuing the struggle."

Through his tireless guidance and good example, Ka Cesar's wish is likely to come true. **AB**



Intensifying US wars of aggression

US imperialism under the new Obama administration continues to incite wars in areas it suspects to be al Qaeda strongholds. Even though Obama has promised to reduce the number of American troops in Iraq, the process has been exceedingly slow. As many as 130,000 American troops will be remaining in Iraq for the next two years.

The Obama regime is silent regarding the more than 100,000 armed "civilian contract workers" in Iraq who are in fact mercenaries brought in from companies like Blackwater in order to sidestep limits set for the number of soldiers that can be deployed in the wartorn country. In fact, plans are afoot to send more mercenaries to replace regular American troops that are being sent home.

Obama has issued strong calls for more intensified military intervention in Afghanistan and nearby Pakistan. For the first time, the US' annual war expenditures in Afghanistan have exceeded that of Iraq.

Obama ordered the deployment of 20,000 more troops in Afghanistan last February. This will bring the number of American soldiers currently deployed in that country to 68,000—double the number at the end of 2008. The US and NATO have up to 80,000 soldiers in Afghanistan in addition to 5,000 mercenaries.

Thousands of Afghan civilians have been killed by US and NATO forces since 2005, many of them from aerial bombings. One such incident took place on August 22, 2008, when as many as 91 civilians were killed in six hours of aerial bombings and ground attacks by US forces on a village in Azizabad. Most of the victims were children (61) and women (15).

The US has made a practice of attacking large gatherings such as weddings and funerals, believing

that any big congregation of Afghans is hostile to the US.

The war in Afghanistan has spilled over to Pakistan. The Obama regime has outdone the former Bush regime in the number of times it has ordered attacks by Reaper and Predator drones. Since last year, the US has launched at-

tack drones more than 35 times from northwestern Pakistan, resulting in even more civilian casualties. This has led to intensified protests and worsening instability in Pakistan.

Although he has publicly denounced some of Bush's policies, Obama's actions in instigating war and destabilization in the Middle East and Central Asia show that he has been doing exactly the same things he has criticized in his predecessor. AB

Drone bombings

At least 90 people were killed in Pakistan when US drones mercilessly rained bombs upon South Waziristan on June 25.

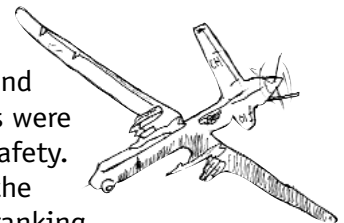
One drone bombed Wana, South Waziristan because of US suspicions that it was a Taliban stronghold. As many as 45 people were killed. Later that afternoon, the US bombed a funeral procession being held for those who died in the bombing that morning, killing another 45 people and wounding many others. Three more bombs were released by the drones as people ran to safety.

Though there was no evidence of it, the US said that the bombs killed three high-ranking Taliban officials. What was undeniable was the huge number of civilian casualties.

This incident is but the latest in a long list of massacres committed by the US against civilians through aerial bombings. Right after taking power at the White House, Obama ordered the intensification of bombings in the area.

The Obama regime claims that the bombings have resulted in the deaths of twenty high-ranking al Qaeda officials holed up along the Pakistani-Afghan border. Last April, a Pakistani newspaper reported the names of 687 civilians killed (including 14 al Qaeda officials) in more than 60 bombing raids. For every al Qaeda official allegedly killed, 50 civilians died as collateral damage.

In-depth investigations by other journalists have revealed the Central Intelligence Agency's arbitrary method of determining drone targets. It hires agents to plant electronic homing devices in the houses of suspected al Qaeda members and it is these houses that are targeted by the drones. AB



Series of protests held against cha-cha

EXACTLY a year before the scheduled end of Gloria Arroyo's term, more than 5,000 rallyists held a "March against Cha-cha" at around 6:00 pm on June 30 at the Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila.

Most of the demonstrators were students from the Pamantasan ng Lunsod ng Maynila, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, University of the Philippines, De La Salle University, College of St. Benilde, St. Scholastica's College, Adamson University, Arellano University and Jose Rizal University.

Members of the Manila City Hall Employees also joined the rally. Bearing streamers that read "Manilans Resist Charter Change (MAR-CHA)", the delegation was led by Mayor Alfredo Lim in the march towards Liwasang Bonifacio. Progressive representatives from Bayan Muna, Anakpawis, GABRIELA and Kabataan party and personalities such as Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada, film director Carlitos Siguion-Reyna and his wife Bibeth Orteza, violinist Cookie Bolipata and National Artist Bien Lumbera showed their support for the students' protest action.

The protest actions did not end with the march. On July 2 and 3, students and their allies began a simultaneous noise barrage against con-ass. The latest noise barrage was launched by students from the Ateneo de Manila University, Miriam College and the University of the Philippines. They will continue to hold weekly noise barrages until Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 27.

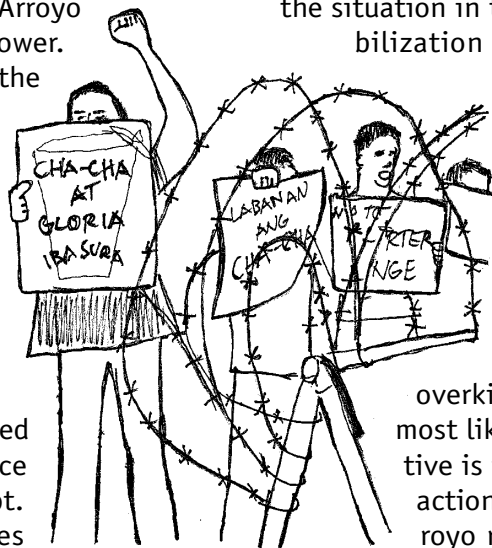
On the eve of the SONA, anti-Arroyo forces will launch a march-caravan. The marchers will mass up on the afternoon of July 27 to hold an alternative SONA on Commonwealth Avenue near the Batasan

complex in Quezon City. They also plan to hold a vigil around the Batasan Complex to prevent Arroyo allies in the Lower House from changing the constitution so that Arroyo can remain in power.

Meanwhile, the militarization of Metro Manila has intensified a full three weeks before Arroyo's ninth SONA. The Philippine National Police (PNP) has formed Task Force Peace led by Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales

of the PNP-National Capital Region ostensibly to ensure security during the SONA. The PNP said it would be fielding additional police forces based on their assessment of the situation in the face of a destabilization threat dubbed "Oplan August Moon."

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) described the multitude of security forces as an overkill and said that most likely, the real objective is to suppress protest actions against the Arroyo regime. **AB**



IADL condemns Arroyo Regime

MORE than 200 delegates of the 17th Congress of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers condemned the Arroyo regime for the killings and harassment of lawyers and judges in the Philippines. The congress, which was attended by the National Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL) from the Philippines, was held in Hanoi, Vietnam in the third week of June.

The IADL called on the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Lawyers and Judges to investigate the attacks. More than 40 lawyers and judges have been killed since Gloria Arroyo came to power. The IADL likewise assailed the Arroyo regime for refusing to conduct serious investigations and file charges against state security forces responsible for human rights violations.

The IADL also called on the Philippine government to put a stop to repression and resume peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. It also called on the US government to stop providing military assistance to the Arroyo regime and to cease all forms of military intervention in the Philippines, especially the deployment of American troops.

The IADL is an international organization of human rights lawyers from 100 countries that was founded in 1947. It enjoys consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). **AB**

Austrians support Nestlé workers

AUSTRIANS and Filipinos launched a picket in front of the Nestlé offices in Austria in a show of solidarity for the struggle of Nestlé workers in Cabuyao, Laguna.

According to the Philippine Solidarity and Friendship Group (PSFG), Nestlé Philippines continues to withhold the retirement plan benefits stipulated in its Collective Bargaining Agreement with its workers that has been in effect for almost 20 years now. This includes the benefits due to retired workers and their families.

The PSFG also assailed Nestlé Philippines and the Arroyo regime for their brutal acts against the workers, among them the murder of union leader Diosdado "Ka Fort" Fortuna who was slain by Arroyo henchmen on September 22, 2005; the violent dispersals of the workers' strikes; and the filing of trumped-up charges against present union leaders. PSFG also began an internet petition calling on the Nestlé head office in Switzerland to respect the rights of Nestlé Philippines workers to enter into negotiations with management.

Ka Wilson of KMU passes away

KILUSANG Mayo Uno (KMU) secretary general Ka Wilson Fronda Baldonaza, 55, passed away on July 1. He had been bedridden for several weeks after suffering a stroke on June 5.

KMU, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Anakpawis, Bayan Muna and other progressive organizations paid tribute to him on July 3. The KMU hailed Ka Wilson as a hard-working union leader and an excellent teacher to his fellow workers and citizens.

Ka Wilson was a member of the Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan (SDK) and was an organizer in his hometown of Victoria, Tarlac before martial law was declared in 1972. He led the Mabuhay Textile Mills union in 1985 and became secretary general of BAYAN in Valenzuela from 1987-1990. In 2000, he chaired the Alliance of Nationalist and Genuine Labor Organizations (ANGLO) and in 2007 was elected as KMU secretary general.

CPP lambasts promotion of 3 military officers

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) joined Edita Burgos in lambasting Gloria Arroyo for promoting three military officers involved in the abduction of Burgos' son Jonas in April 2007.

Lt. Cols. Noel Clement, Melquiades Feliciano and Edison Caga, officers of the 56th IB based in Norzagaray, Bulacan were promoted to full colonel in June. An investigation revealed that the license plate TAB-194 which was on one of the vehicles used in the abduction of Jonas Burgos was traced to a vehicle which was then impounded within the 56th IB's camp.

Despite the glaring evidence, the military cleared the officers of any culpability in the abduction.

Workers assail layoffs at Triumph



AS many as 1,662 workers of Triumph International and Star Performance Incorporated, the largest undergarments manufacturers in the country are in danger of losing their jobs when the company shuts down in August.

According to the Bagong Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa ng Triumph International, the company's planned shutdown is unjustified and will mean mass layoffs and continuing hardship for the families of affected workers. According to union chair Isabelita Dela Cruz, Triumph's moves are illegal because they violate the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the workers and the company. Triumph even threatened to withhold all benefits if the workers fought against the shutdown.

The union criticized management's decision to close down the company allegedly because of the effects of the international financial crisis. They said that the German-owned company which employs 40,000 workers worldwide makes millions of dollars in profit every year. They also added that the shutdown is an attack on their rights and welfare as workers because this will result in mass layoffs in different countries.

They also blamed the Arroyo regime, calling it the Number One protector of Triumph International because of the Department of Labor and Employment's (DOLE's) support for the company's decision to close shop.